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CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of operating a contention-based, multiple access communication system comprising the steps of:

accepting a reservation request for access by a user to a shared communication resource, the reservation request indicating at least a future date and time;

creating a reservation record in a management data base, the reservation record associated with the user; and

at the appointed date and time, reserving at least a portion of the shared communication resource for exclusive use by the user.

- A method as in claim 1 wherein the reservation equest specifies a desired bandwidth for the shared communication resource.
- 3. A method as in claim 1 wherein the reservation request additionally specifies a physical location for the shared communication resource.
- 4. A method as in claim 1 wherein the reservation request additionally specifies a call duration for the shared communication resource.
- A method as in claim 4 comprising the additional step of:
 releasing the reserved communication resource once the call duration
 specified by the reservation request has expired.
 - 6. A method as in claim 4 comprising the additional step of:

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near the end of the call duration, sending a warning prompt to the user that the call is about to be terminated.

- 7. A method as in claim 4 additionally comprising the step of:

 near the end of the call duration, prompting the user to request whether
 the call duration should be extended.
- 8. A method as in claim 1 comprising the additional step of:

 releasing the communication resource if the user does not attempt to access the communication resource within a predetermined time after the reservation time.
- 10 9. A method as in claim 1 wherein the shared communication resource is a radio channel in a wireless communication system.
 - 10. A method as in claim 1 wherein the reservation record is stored in a home location register.
 - 1. A method as in claim 10 additionally comprising the steps of:
 - prior to the reservation time, reading the reservation record from the home location register;
 - validating the reservation record for access if the user is authorized; and moving the validated reservation record to a visitor location register.
- 12. A method as in claim 1 wherein the reservation record additionally specifies telephone numbers for other users to be connected at the appointed date and time.

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- 13. A method as in claim 1 wherein the reservation record additionally specifies a billing rate for the reservation request.
- 14. A method as in claim 1 wherein the reservation request is made for the user by another party who will participate in communicating with the user at the appointed date and time.
- 15. A method as in claim 1 wherein the wireless communication system is a cellular system, and the method further comprises the additional steps of:

accepting a reservation request indicating an expected physical location for the user at the appointed date and time; and

reserving a communication resource in one or more cells in an area near the expected physical location.

16. A method as in claim 1 wherein the wireless communication system is a cellular system, and the method further comprises the additional steps of:

accepting a reservation request indicating an expected physical location and expected route for the user at the appointed date and time; and

reserving a communication resource in one or more cells located along the expected route.